

Message Text

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17/44

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 DHA-02 ORM-02 AID-05 SAB-01

IO-11 /084 W

----- 081516

O 051224Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8500

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

USCIMOEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 1165

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

DELIVER TO NEA/ARN/DRAPER AT OPENING OF BUSINESS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: 0900 LEBANON REPORT

1. COUNCIL OF MINISTERS YESTERDAY ANNOUNCED PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF DESTROYED AREAS TO PERMIT RETURN OF 33,000 PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN LEFT HOMELESS IN THE COUNTRY. AREAS NAMED WERE DAMOUR, JIYE, CHIYAH, AS WELL AS THE SEHEL-SUD, BEKAA AND AKKAR REGIONS. THIS IS FIRST TIME GOVERNMENT HAS PUBLISHED FIGURE OF THE HOMELESS. FROM OUR VARIOUS CONTACTS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS WHO HAVE COME HERE, INCLUDING UNHCR, WHICH CALLED ON
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US YESTERDAY, IT WOULD APPEAR GOVT INSTITUTIONS ARE STILL

HAVING TROUBLE SORTING OUT WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE, BUT THERE IS CONSIDERABLE DRIVE BEHIND THE TASK, PARTICULARLY IN PERSON OF MINISTER GHASSAN TUENI.

2. COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ALSO REFUSED TO SET DATE FOR VISIT OF FRANGIE TO DAMASCUS, LEAVING IT TO FRANGIE HIMSELF TO DECIDE. WE NOTE KHADDAM RETURNED YESTERDAY FROM DAMASCUS AND WENT INTO A SERIES OF CONSULTATIONS WITH VARIOUS LEADERS, INCLUDING ARAFAT. CONSULTATIONS CONTINUE TODAY, TO INCLUDE MARONITE PATRIARCH KHOREISH. ARAFAT HAS ANNOUNCED HE WILL GO TO DAMASCUS TOMORROW. WE KEEP PICKING UP RUMORS THAT CHRISTIANS ARE UNHAPPY ABOUT RELATIVELY LOW STATE OF SECURITY AND ARE QUESTIONING VALUE AS WELL AS WISDOM OF RELIANCE ON SYRIAN GUARANTEES OF ANY POLITICAL AGREEMENT. OFFICIAL EXPLANATION FOR CONTINUING DELAY IN FRANGIE TRIP IS INSECURITY OF THE BEKAA, SINCE FRANGIE REPORTEDLY WANTS TO TRAVEL TO DAMASCUS BY CAR AND WILL NOT ACCEPT SYRIAN MILITARY ESCORT.

3. LEBANESE ARMY REMAINS IN HIGHLY DISORGANIZED STATE, THOUGH WE NOTE ISRAELI HAVE ANNOUNCED RETURN OF MANY UNITS TO LEBANESE POSITIONS LONG ISRAELI BORDER. WE ARE TRYING TO CONFIRM THIS. MEANWHILE, JUMBLATT HAS RAISED CHARGES THAT MOSLEMS RETURNING TO UNITS IN ARMY AND INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES ARE OFTEN BEING ARRESTED AND INTERROGATED AS TO THEIR ACTIVITIES, CONTRARY TO GOVT ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THEY COULD RETURN WITHOUT BEING PENALIZED. WE HAVE SOME REPORTS THAT THIS MAY BE HAPPENING, PARTICULARLY OUTSIDE OF BEIRUT.

4. BEIRUT ITSELF CONTINUES ON ROAD TO NORMALIZATION DESPITE ISOLATED INCIDENTS. BANKS HAVE ANNOUNCED THEY WILL REOPEN FEBRUARY 12.

5. WE HAVE BROADENED THE NUMBER OF ADDRESSEES OF THIS REPORT IN VIEW OF OUR DISCONTINUING THE LONGER DAILY REPORT WE HAVE BEEN DOING. ADDRESSEES SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THAT 0900 REPORT IS MORE INFORMAL AND IMPRESSIONISTIC EARLY MORNING DOCUMENT NORMALLY DONE BY THE CHIEF OF MISSION TO ALERT WASHINGTON AND CONFIDENTIAL

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NEIGHBORING POSTS TO TRENDS OF THE DAY. IT SHOULD NOT BE RELIED ON AS A RECORD OF DAILY OCCURRENCES, WHICH WE HOPE TO COVER IN MORE DEPTH THROUGH OUR NORMAL EMBASSY REPORTING.
LAMBRAKIS

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